

black were trailing at half time 18–13. That all changed when they rallied in the second half to capture the lead and win. Not just win, but win big, 54–47. They are the girls basketball champions of Texas.

Congratulations, Lady Wolves. Your parents are proud of you. Plano is proud of you. America is proud of you, and I salute every one of you.

God bless each one of you and God bless America.

Mr. Speaker, the following are the names of the players and I would like to congratulate them one and all:

Becca Feagin, junior; Mary Rich, junior; Rachel Hester, senior; Alexis Morgan, senior; Lindsay Hughes, senior; Katie Makanani, sophomore; Taylor Shead, junior; Tawani Ichimura, senior; Kristen Nash, senior; Kathleen Nash, junior; and Micah Garoutte, junior.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

AMERICA IS A NATION OF LAWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, it is often said that America is a nation of immigrants, but there is also another important point, not to be ignored. America is a nation of laws. We are increasing border security, and security is very important in this day and age, in this tough world that we live in. We are increasing border security by constructing fences, bolstering our border patrols and escalating our surveillance capabilities.

It is of first and most importance to our Nation that we step up and halt this mass influx of foreign trespassers known as illegal immigrants. To grant amnesty to these trespassers is to say: You crossed our border illegally, you broke our laws, and now we are rewarding you with U.S. citizenship. Congratulations.

That is absolutely the wrong way to go. A guest worker program is nothing more than amnesty wearing make-up. It is easier to look at, but it is still ugly underneath.

For legal immigrants, we must replace our outdated bureaucratic procedures with updated technology. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services currently processes 7 million immigration applications in our country every year. They do it using Windows 95 and paper printouts. This system is obviously and absolutely flawed. We need to fix the process for immigrants to come here legally.

That is why I introduced the Comprehensive Immigration DATA Act,

H.R. 4412, to modernize the immigration application process by creating a Federal, computerized database that more efficiently and effectively tracks immigrants applying for visas or for U.S. citizenship.

It is time that we step up in terms of our governmental policy, to make sure our government bureaucrats here in Washington are being responsive to our Nation's needs and to be accountable. The best way we can do that is by giving them the technology to do their jobs, and that is what I am trying to achieve with this bill. It is good in terms of policy for legal immigrants. It is the right thing to protect our borders, and it is good for our national security.

Mr. Speaker, it is progress that we need to make as a country.

FIREARMS CORRECTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Judiciary Committee held a hearing on H.R. 5005, the Firearms Corrections and Improvement Act. But I don't want to let the name of this legislation fool you. This bill only serves to improve the chances of somebody getting away with a gun crime.

This bill proposes changes that will undermine Federal law and endanger public safety. These are not mere technical corrections, but a blatant attempt to restrict use of the ATF's National Trace Center's database. Previously, the NRA's friends in Congress have inserted language into appropriation bills to restrict access to some important ballistic information.

H.R. 5005 will make restriction access the law. The ATF's gun tracing program helps local police solve gun crimes by analyzing the unique marks made on bullets and cartridges and cases when guns are fired. The images of these markings can be compared with other images in more than 200 Federal, State and local law enforcement laboratories.

But H.R. 5005 would make it a crime for police departments to share information from the database of other departments. Say a police department in my district on Long Island obtains ballistic information from the ATF and a similar shooting occurs in New York City, the Long Island department wouldn't be able to share that information.

In fact, the officer who did share this information could be arrested. That is absolutely insane. Instead of cracking down on criminals using guns, this bill treats police officers like criminals.

Since 9/11, responders in New York and throughout the Nation have gone to great lengths to increase interoperability and information sharing, and now H.R. 5005 comes along and makes information sharing between police de-

partments a crime. Again, some Members of this body put their allegiance to the NRA above common sense.

The tracing program provides law enforcement agencies with valuable information about gun trafficking that can prevent crimes from happening. Tracing helps the public identify gun dealers and traffickers who are supplying illegal guns in our communities, but this legislation would prevent the use of trace data as evidence in any State or Federal court or any non-ATF administrative proceedings.

This bill cuts local law enforcement out of the loop. Without this tracing data local law enforcement officers will not be able to pursue civil action on suppliers that have been implicated in crimes without the ATF's involvement. We all know the ATF doesn't get the resources to get involved in every civil issue regarding gun crimes, but H.R. 5005 does not stop at limiting access to tracing the database. The legislation also makes it more difficult for local police to receive reports of multiple gun purchases. Law enforcement can use these reports to discover whether straw purchasers or gun traffickers are replenishing their inventory. But if this bill becomes law, police will no longer be able to access this information.

The bill also prevents the ATF from maintaining a database of firearm purchase information. This provision would hurt investigations by local law enforcement to determine the point of sale origin of firearms that can help locate an assailant.

As New York City Mayor Bloomberg pointed out in his testimony yesterday, if police can crack down on taverns that serve under-aged drinkers, why can't they go after gun dealers who knowingly sell to criminals?

And since 1 percent of the gun dealers sell 57 percent of the guns used in crimes, this information is vital for police to conduct investigations and root out dishonest gun dealers. This bill is the latest in a long line of misguided legislation that puts protecting the gun industry before keeping guns out of the hands of criminals. No other industry in the country has this kind of protection.

The gun industry already has immunity from litigation resulting from its negligence over incompetence. The industry can now sell military assault weapons to the general public. But now this legislation would protect the 1 percent of dishonest gun dealers who are fueling gun violence throughout this country with their irresponsible business practices. This legislation does nothing to protect the second amendment rights. Nothing in this legislation makes it any easier to hunt or defend themselves using a firearm.

Simply put, H.R. 5005 does more to promote gun crimes than gun rights.

I hope yesterday's hearings showed the public what a bad bill H.R. 5005 really is. I would like to thank Mayor Bloomberg for his opposition to this